Guidelines for Using King County Email

This guide will help you use the King County E-mail System. It is a companion to the King County E-mail Policy. These guidelines are provided to help you understand your responsibilities when using e-mail and encourage you to be good e-mail citizens.

Email is an effective and efficient communications tool. Simply put, it is an electronic version of paper letters and memos, and the same rules of business etiquette apply. Users are ultimately responsible for their actions on the email system. Email messages should show consideration and respect and should not be intended to harm other people. The use of the network is a privilege, not a right, which may be revoked at any time for abusive conduct. Be professional and careful in what you say to others.

The fact that a user **can** perform a particular function does not imply that they **should** take that action. Follow correct escalation procedures when corresponding with management and elected officials. For example, don't send a complaint to the County Executive or Council just because you can.

E-mail is the property of King County; it may be subject to review by managers or under public disclosure laws. Don't send an e-mail message that you would not want broadcast to your supervisors or posted on a bulletin board. Mail can be forwarded to others without your knowledge or consent.

How to Use E-mail

Email is business communication and should be written as such. Just as when writing a letter on county letterhead, including a salutation and complimentary close helps make your message professional and courteous.

Check your e-mail messages daily. If you are planning an extended leave of absence, please notify the ITS Help Desk at 684-1875 so your mailbox size can be managed while you're away.

Your mailbox size limit is 25 megabytes (MB) and includes not only messages and attachments in your Inbox, but also your Calendar, Deleted Items and Sent Items folders. You will receive an email notification when your mailbox size reaches 22MB. At 25MB, your mailbox will be restricted from sending messages, and at 30MB you will not be able to send or receive e-mail until your mailbox size decreases by deleting unnecessary items.

Keep messages as clear and concise as possible. Efforts should be made to limit the overall size of e-mail messages, including attachments, due to mailbox capacity restraints. For large attachments, other means of distribution should be used.

Delete any unwanted messages immediately. At the end of the workday, empty the Outlook Deleted Items folder. Keeping the number of messages in your e-mail account to a minimum will make it easier for you to manage. However, you may need to retain some messages in accordance with public record laws, visit
http://www.metrokc.gov/recelec/archives/pubs/spring2001.htm for more information.

Remember to always include a pertinent subject line on the messages you send. People will then be able to easily identify what your message is about and be able to locate it later. Experienced e-mail users will use the subject line to prioritize when **or if** they want to read a message.

Make sure e-mail is the right communications tool to reach your intended audience.

If you receive mail that you do not want or need (junk mail), you may delete it or use the "Junk Mail" filter feature available within Outlook. You can find more about this filter by using the Answer Wizard in Microsoft Outlook Help.

Global messages (messages sent to *everyone*) are restricted and must be officially sanctioned King County communications. If your department needs assistance, please call the ITS Help Desk at 684-1875.

Don't send inappropriate mass mailings (messages sent to large groups of people). Never "Reply All" to a message that was mass mailed.

Typing a message in ALL CAPITAL LETTERS indicates you are SHOUTING. ONLY use capital letters when trying to make a point (as in this example).

"Flame" mail is a verbal attack in electronic form. Don't send "flaming" messages. If you are the victim of such an attack, the best advice is to ignore it. Getting into a verbal war will seldom solve any problem.

Security

Each one of us has the responsibility to keep our network secure. Here are some basic rules that can help you do your part:

- Never give your user ID or password to anyone, unless it is a system administrator that you know.
- Do not stay logged into e-mail or any other networked application while you are away from your desk. Never stay logged into e-mail overnight.
- It is your responsibility to maintain your password. It must meet the strong password criteria and it will expire every 90 days. Keep the password simple enough for you to remember but it cannot contain your first or last name or your network username. For more information regarding strong passwords, visit
  http://kcweb.metrokc.gov/dias/its/questionsits.htm#nineteen
  http://kcweb.metrokc/gov/oirm/governance/policies/Personal_Computer_Password_Usage.doc
- Your files may be accessible by people with system privileges, so do not keep anything private or confidential. Remember, e-mail is the property of King County.

Help Desk

The ITS Help Desk is available to you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by calling 684-1875. If voice mail answers, please leave a message.

If you are experiencing problems with your account, it is your responsibility to report it to the ITS Help Desk or your LAN administrator. If you don't report the problem, we can't fix it.

Computer problems can be frustrating, but the ITS Help Desk is there to assist you. Be patient and know that when you call your problem will be addressed as promptly as possible.

Remember, computers do what we tell them to do. If you are having trouble using e-mail, help is available. One hour spent in training can save you hours of frustration. Contact the ITS Help Desk

at 684-1875 for information or visit their web page http://help.metrokc.gov/. You may also find many helpful hints within the comprehensive Microsoft Outlook Help feature. You may also visit Microsoft's Support website http://support.microsoft.com/ph/2520 for useful tips.

DO...

- send clear, concise, professional messages
- limit the size of e-mail attachments
- identify yourself to those you don't know
- be respectful and courteous when composing e-mail messages
- use the e-mail system for business only
- report outages to the ITS Help Desk
- actively manage your mailbox size
- keep your desktop and e-mail secure

DON'T...
(These behaviors will not be tolerated and could result disciplinary action)

- send messages containing racist, sexist, or other inappropriate content or language
- use e-mail for any type of illegal activity
- use the e-mail system for personal gain
- send destructive or malicious criticism
- send harassing messages
- create or forward chain letters
- send unauthorized mass mailings

Global messages (messages sent to everyone) are restricted. The following criteria must be met for a message to be considered for a global email:

- Official County Business information affecting **EVERY** King County employee
- Official information that needs to be distributed quickly or is time critical.
- Cannot contain information regarding parties
- Cannot contain information regarding retirement notices
- Cannot contain information regarding items for sale
- Cannot contain any information an employee can profit from
- Cannot contain any information that is commercial or political in nature

If you have any questions about these guidelines, please contact the Enterprise Solution Center at 684-1875.